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teen octavo volumes, at intervals from 1801 to 1827. There is reason for regret that no competent editor has as yet undertaken to prepare an edition of Burke, with such biographical, historical, and literary notes as are required to give to the general reader a knowledge of the circumstances under which his various writings appeared, of their relations to his life, and of their contemporary effect. Such information must now be collected from the biographies of the author, and from various other sources. The debt of England, and we may add of America, to the most eloquent of English orators and the most philosophic of English statesmen, will not be discharged till this due honor has been paid to the masterpieces in which the ample stores of his political wisdom are contained, and in which his marvellous fertility of imagination, powers of thought, and mastery of expression are displayed.

But we need not pronounce the eulogium of Burke, nor recommend the study of his works. They will remain the delight of the lover of noble thought delivered in noble language; and every student of the science of politics will turn to them for much of his best instruction.

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15. — *France and England in North America. A Series of Historical Narratives.* By FRANCIS PARKMAN, Author of "History of the Conspiracy of Pontiac," "Prairie and Rocky Mountain Life," &c. Part First. *Pioneers of France in the New World.* Boston: Little, Brown, & Co. 1865. 8vo. pp. xxii., 420.

The choice of so insignificant a thing as a title has sometimes had no small influence on the good or evil fortunes of a book. The selection of a subject has often a yet more immediate bearing on the fate of an author. A happy judgment in this particular is a very considerable argument of his aptness for his task, and a by no means unimportant part of that innate outfit of ability which insures as well as justifies prosperity. To know his own aptitudes and limitations, to obey instinctively the natural magnetism of his talents and temperament, proves a writer to be gifted with that taste, which, if not itself genius, is at least the unerring counsellor that makes it available for service and success. No force of mind will overcome the uncouthness and repugnancy of a churlish theme. There are blocks which have not in them any Mercury, winged messenger of the gods, the guide of dreams. The avenues of fame show many an unsightly monument of misadventurous powers.

Mr. Parkman has shown a singular felicity in his selection of topics. There is a part of history which we call, somewhat indefinitely, perhaps,

its romance, as if all history, rightly understood, were not the highest poetry, "accommodating the shows of things to the desires of the mind." There are bits of story here and there, however, as there are corners of the landscape, that are more especially picturesque, like the death of Sir John Chandos and the feat of John Seaton in Froissart. There are also slender currents of life, adventure, and heroic achievement, which seem rather to be swallowed in the main stream of events than to be tributary to it, but which, if explored, lead us among scenery all the more charming for its untrodden seclusion and its miniature completeness. There are inconsequential achievements, or even failures, like that of De Soto, which have a singular fascination. They gratify that interest in personal doing and suffering which is stronger, perhaps, than what is excited in us by the fate of empires, as the majority of mankind are more eager for gossip than for a knowledge of great events. It is for this picturesque side of history, as of nature, these adventurous sallies of character, that Mr. Parkman has a natural predilection, and therefore a lucky eye, for it is our own temperaments that we see most vividly in men and things. This intellectual idiosyncrasy, while it gives vividness to his narrative, tinges his style, and sometimes, as it appears to us, his judgment. There is a little too much, we will not say floweriness, but botany, in the earlier half of the book, which makes the tragic grimness of the facts contrast somewhat unpleasantly with the sentimentalism of their setting. For example: "Here the rich gordonia, never out of bloom, sends down its thirsty roots to drink at the stealing brook. Here the halesia hangs out its silvery bells, the purple clusters of the wistaria droop from the supporting bough, and the coral blossoms of the erythrina glow in the shade beneath," &c. (p. 58.) All very well in Bartram's Journal, or in its proper place in Mr. Parkman's book; but here it is æsthetically wrong. It is to mingle flower with historical painting, distracting the eye, with bits of bright color, from the heroic figures. The French on such an errand as here described would not have noticed them, and the reader, who only sees with their eyes, feels the incongruity. The form seems sometimes to make our author forget the spirit, though it is here, after all, that we are to look for that moral picturesque which is more profoundly impressive than any gayety of costume. Mr. Parkman, we think, loses sight of the distinction, when in his Introduction, making an antithesis of New France and New England, he says that the latter "has not been fruitful in those salient and striking forms of character which often give a dramatic life to the annals of nations far less prosperous." Winthrop is to us a figure more attractive, even to the imagination, than Champlain or Cartier. Jonathan Edwards among the

Housatonic Indians, adapting Calvinism to the demands of logic, is as romantic as the best Jesuit of them all. And in what we may call the physically picturesque, the Canadian expedition of Arnold may vie with any passage in the history of French enterprise in the New World. Any comparison between the early French and English colonizations which would account for diversity of results from original differences of character, without allowing for variety of circumstance, is entirely fallacious. The French were invited to adventurous exploration by their great river with its numerous affluents, and by the chains of larger and lesser lakes that stretched westward and southward. They pushed no permanent settlements inland away from these watery highways, which even in winter were still guides, as well as smooth and solid roads. Their habit of memoir-writing gives them an advantage with posterity; but that a spirit of daring enterprise should have been wanting to that less communicative race which wrestled with and threw the shaggy Pan of the wilderness, and urged into untravelled seas the dangerous chase after whales, is hardly conceivable.

Mr. Parkman, shut out from active adventure by infirmities of body, and wellnigh debarred from reading and writing by a weakness of eyesight only short of total blindness, has consoled himself for the one misfortune by tracing and celebrating the achievements of others, and has conquered the other by a cheerful constancy equal to that of any of the brave spirits whose exploits he so enthusiastically records. In his present volume he first sketches the attempts of the French at colonizing the coasts of Carolina and Florida, ending with the wild vengeance of Dominique de Gourgues, that last *derringdo* which shows in full lineaments the fierce and hardy features of the age of chivalry, and then with more fulness of detail and abundance of narrative sets before us the works and days of Champlain, which naturally involve the history of French discovery and settlement in the northern parts of the continent. It is by far the most complete and interesting narrative of these events we have ever read. If it lack something of the simple grace and attractive quaintness of the story as told by the original actors in it, a kind of charm due to a certain bluntness of thinking and consequent *naïveté* of language no longer possible, it has the advantage in clearness, directness, and unity of purpose, and in a compression which is now more sadly demanded than ever by that most impatient of men, the general reader. Clearness and accuracy are also much enhanced by Mr. Parkman's own familiarity with the country which is the scene of his story, and especially with the red men, who are such important actors in it. By a thorough study of authorities, and by personal investigation among existing tribes, he has perhaps a better right

to speak with authority as to the moral and intellectual qualities of those too-often idealized savages than any other writer. His conclusions are hardly more flattering than those of Dr. Palfrey. Mr. Parkman has that prime merit of an historian, the conscientious study and comparison of original documents. He does not write history at second hand. He has that hearty enthusiasm which gives warmth and life alike to subject and reader, making his books wholesome reading for both old and young. To the latter such a volume as this is an especial godsend, offering them an ideal of generous hardihood. We have many examples of books, written down to the assumed level of boys, which we should suppose to be idiocy, did we not know that idiots are divinely protected from such reading. A book like this is precisely what we would put into the hands of a healthy boy along with the Arabian Nights, that the balance might not incline too much either on the side of adventure or fancy.

The volume gives Mr. Parkman a rank with the best of our historians, and we regret his infirmity of vision the more, that it will delay the completion of his projected work, and keep us hungry for those parts of it which will be the freshest and most interesting, — the story of the Jesuit missions and of the final surrender of French colonization to a force morally superior to its own. Unless it be the contest between France and England in Hindostan, there is nothing in history more vividly picturesque than the battle-ground of arms and ideas in the trackless wilderness of our Western world, and we know of none so fit, both by natural inclination and study, to be its historian as Mr. Parkman.

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16. — *Voyage de Jaques Cartier au Canada en 1534. Nouvelle Edition, publiée d'après l'édition de 1598 et d'après Ramusio.* Par M. H. MICHELANT. Avec deux Cartes.— Documents inédits sur Jaques Cartier et le Canada, communiqués par M. Alfred Ramé. Paris : Librairie Tross. 1865. pp. vii., 71, 53.

THE fresh interest which Mr. Parkman's admirable account of early French adventure in North America is awakening in American readers leads us to call attention to this reprint of the Journal of the first voyage to Canada of Cartier, the bold Breton seaman, the explorer of the St. Lawrence, and the namer of Montreal. A similar reprint of the narrative of his second voyage, in 1535, was made a year or two since. Both of these volumes are carefully edited and beautifully printed, and the edition consists of but a small number of copies. The opportunity of securing these volumes should not be lost by the collectors of books on American history.